

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Claims 6-17, 21 and 22 are pending in this application. The Examiner has rejected claims 6-17 and 21 under 35 U.S.C. §112 as being indefinite. The Examiner has also rejected and claims 6-17, 21 and 22 under 35 U.S.C. §102(e) as being anticipated by Peckover (6,119,101). By this amendment, claim 6 has been amended, claims 21-22 have been cancelled without prejudice, and claims 23-25 have been newly added.

The Applicant would like to thank the Examiner for his time during a telephone interview on January 19, 2006 in which the Examiner further clarified the rejection of the claims. During that interview, claim 22 was discussed with specific reference to Peckover, but no agreement was reached. The Applicant has attempted to incorporate the substance of the discussions of that interview into the amendments to claims 6 and into new claims 23-25. The Examiner is requested to provide initial focus to new claims 23-25.

New Claims 23-25

The Applicant submits that Peckover is directed at a system comprising a "virtual marketplace" (col. 14, lines 26-27) in which consumers and providers are each represented by personal agents. In Peckover, a personal agent stores and learns the preferences of its human owner and arranges the delivery of messages to the owner according to the owner's desired delivery times and desired delivery devices (col. 14, lines 36-41). Peckover teaches using a preference manager function to maintain data about the preferences of a particular user, and which indicate items of interest to the user, such as favorite brands and interest

in sport (col. 19, lines 3-6). The preference manager uses preference data to order search results for its human owner so that items that are more likely to be preferred by the user will be displayed first (col. 19, lines 18-22).

The Applicant submits that Peckover is directed at storing attributes of a particular customer, and that Peckover does not teach or suggest dynamically associating attributes specified by a customer in a search with a particular product in an attribute correspondence table in an e-shop or e-mall, such that subsequent customers can search for that same product using the new search attributes, as generally claimed in, for example, new claim 23 of the present application.

Specifically, the Applicant submits that Peckover does not teach or suggest at least the elements of:

an attribute correspondence table associated with an "e-mall" rather than the customer;

"recording at least one new correspondence relationship between the new attribute and a product attribute that is associated with the first product in the attribute correspondence table"; and

"presenting, to the subsequent e-customer, subsequent product results including at least one product selected from the plurality of products, the subsequent product results based on: the initial set of product attributes, the subsequent search attributes, and the correspondence relationships recorded in the attribute correspondence table";

as claimed in new claim 23 of the present application. For example, at paragraph 147 of the

present application, when a first e-customer completes a transaction, for example, by purchasing a product such as a teacup:

"[i]f an attribute specified in the transaction did not previously exist in the attribute correspondence table 32, such as 'white or blue' or 'roundlike' in the present example, it is added to the attribute correspondence table 32 and the correspondence relation between the new attribute and a pre-existing attribute, such as the photograph 84, is recorded in the attribute correspondence table 32."

Subsequently, "when another e-customer wishes to purchase a teacup on another occasion and specifies 'white' or 'blue' as the color, the teacup shown in FIG. 5 can be presented as a candidate" because the attribute 'white or blue' has now been associated with that teacup (para. 148). Before the first customer purchased the teacup, the attribute 'white or blue' was not associated with the teacup in FIG. 5, and thus searching for 'white' or 'blue' as an attribute would not identify that particular teacup as a candidate.

Based on the foregoing arguments, the Applicant therefore submits that claim 23 is in condition for allowance. Claims 24-25 depend from claim 23, and for similar reasons, as well as the additional limitations included therein, are also believed to be in condition for allowance.

Claims 6-17, 21 and 22

Indefiniteness

The Examiner has rejected claims 6 and 21 as being indefinite. The Applicant has amended claim 6 to further clarify the claimed subject matter and respectfully submits that claim 6 would be understood by one skilled in the art as being sufficiently definite to satisfy 35 U.S.C. §112.

Anticipation

The Examiner has rejected claims 6-17 and 21-22 under 35 U.S.C. §102(e) as being anticipated by Peckover. The Applicant has amended independent claim 6 to further clarify the claimed subject matter.

Similar to the arguments above with respect to claim 23, the Applicant submits that Peckover does not teach or suggest at least the elements of:

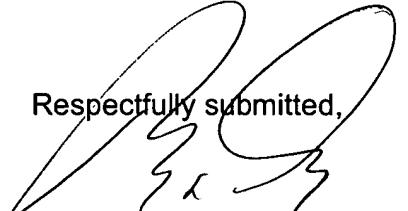
"a correspondence presenting unit configured to present the extracted correspondence relations to subsequent customers in subsequent electronic commercial transactions";

"the search information defining the new correspondence relation is corresponded to information on the merchandise selected in concluding the electronic commercial transaction as a new attribute and recorded in the table"; and

"wherein the correspondence presenting unit is configured to read out and

present the correspondence relations stored in the table at a stage of a
subsequent electronic commercial transaction";
as claimed in claim 6. For this reason, as well as for the additional elements included
therein, the Applicant submits that claim 6 is in condition for allowance. Claims 7-17
depend from claim 6, and for similar reasons, as well as the additional limitations
included therein, are also believed to be in condition for allowance.

In view of the foregoing amendments and remarks it is respectfully submitted that
this application is in condition for allowance. Favourable consideration and prompt
allowance are earnestly solicited.


Respectfully submitted,

USPTO Customer No. 000293

Ralph A. Dowell
Registration No. 26,868
Dowell & Dowell P.C.
Suite 406
2111 Eisenhower Avenue
Alexandria, VA 22314

Telephone No. (703) 415 2555
Facsimile No. (703) 415 2559

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